

FILED UNDER SEAL

EXHIBIT 283

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES
VIRGIN ISLANDS,

Plaintiff,

vs.

No. 22-cv-10904-JSR

JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A.,

Defendant.

JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A.,

Third-Party Plaintiff,

v.

JAMES EDWARD STALEY,
Third-Party Defendant.

THE ORAL DEPOSITION OF SANDRA BESS was taken on
the 18th day of May, 2023 at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel,
6900 Great Bay, Nazareth, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas,
U.S. Virgin Islands, between the hours of 8:43 a.m. and
11:53 a.m. pursuant to Notice and Federal Rules of Civil
Procedure.

Reported by:

DESIREE D. HILL
Registered Merit Reporter
Hill's Reporting Services
P.O. Box 307501
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands
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1 (Deposition Exhibit No. 1 was
2 marked for identification.)

3 Q. (By Mr. Neiman:) Did you -- let's just
4 pause for one second before we start talking about
5 this document.

6 With any of those supervisors, did you
7 ever have any discussions about Mr. Epstein's
8 criminal issues?

9 A. No, sir.

10 Q. Let's take a look at the document that I
11 placed in front of you marked as Exhibit 1.

12 Can you tell me what this is?

13 A. It is the certificate that is given to me,
14 assigned to me, Financial Trust, as a compliance
15 officer.

16 Q. So, this is the certificate for the tax
17 benefit for the Financial Trust Corporation --
18 Financial Trust Company, I should say?

19 A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. And you were the compliance officer in
21 relation to this certificate?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. I'm going to ask you a couple of questions
24 about this certificate.

25 If you take a look at page 3, you'll see

1 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

2 Q. (By Mr. Neiman:) What is Exhibit 2?

3 A. Exhibit 2 is an amendment to -- could I
4 refer to it as Exhibit 1? Yes.

5 Q. Sure.

6 A. Extension amendment, I apologize.

7 Q. So Exhibit 2 is the Extension of benefits
8 as amended for the same company as is addressed in
9 Exhibit 1?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. All right. Were you involved as a
12 compliance officer in both the initial period and the
13 extension period for this company?

14 A. As the compliance officer, yes, sir.

15 Q. Okay. And do you know how it's decided
16 which --

17 A. No, sir.

18 Q. -- compliance officer gets which companies
19 to do their work for?

20 A. No, sir. It would just be assigned by the
21 supervisor.

22 Q. Okay. And would it be typical in your
23 compliance work to make site visits to a company?

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. Tell me about what site visits are.

1 Q. Okay. Did you do any unannounced visits to
2 the Financial Trust Company as best as you can recall?

3 A. As best as I can recall, I probably would
4 have done one or two.

5 Q. Okay. Tell me about the one or two
6 unannounced visits that you recall.

7 A. Nothing that I can specifically recall,
8 but I would show up at the door, identify myself, and
9 then ask to see the compliance person -- the person
10 that I relayed to, speak to on the email, on the
11 phone, or anyone else if that person is not there.

12 Q. Who was the person or people at the
13 Financial Trust Company that you dealt with?

14 A. Cecile de Jongh.

15 Q. Okay. And who is Cecile de Jongh?

16 A. The office manager at the Financial Trust
17 and Southern Trust.

18 Q. And during the time that you were
19 interacting with her as a compliance officer, was she
20 also the First Lady of the Virgin Islands?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. So, her husband was the governor?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. Okay. Did the fact that she was married to
25 the governor affect how you interacted with her in any

1 way?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. Okay. Do you remember where the Financial
4 Trust Company's offices were?

5 A. It was -- it was located in the Yacht
6 Haven, American Yacht Haven on the second floor.

7 Q. Can you describe what the offices were
8 like?

9 A. A glass door, typically white furniture.
10 The reception area would be at the front. I think
11 accounting was in a door right behind the reception
12 area.

13 There was an office -- there was an
14 office off to the right, maybe two or three at the
15 back on the right and there was a kitchen just not
16 too far from the reception area.

17 Q. About how many times were you at the
18 offices of FTC as best as you can recall?

19 A. FTC, maybe once or twice.

20 Q. You seem to be able to describe it very
21 well from one or two visits.

22 A. Yeah, because I have to be -- as a
23 compliance officer be very observant. So --

24 Q. And did Mr. Epstein have an office at
25 Financial Trust Company?

1 (Deposition Exhibit No. 3 was
2 marked for identification.)

3 Q. (By Mr. Neiman:) Do you recognize
4 Exhibit 3?

5 A. Yes, I do.

6 Q. What is Exhibit 3?

7 A. It is a certificate for Southern Trust
8 Company, Inc.

9 Q. And what is Southern Trust Company, Inc. as
10 you understand it?

11 A. Southern Trust Company, Inc. is a
12 designated service which provides --

13 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry,
14 provides --

15 THE WITNESS: -- extensive DNA
16 database, develops data mining platform
17 for a database to be available through
18 the internet.

19 Q. (By Mr. Neiman:) Okay. And that's how the
20 company is described in the certificate, correct?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. And is it correct that Southern Trust
23 Company was one of the companies that you served as
24 the compliance officer for?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 MR. NEIMAN: Okay. All right. We
2 have been going for an hour. Should
3 could we take a short break?

4 MR. ACKERMAN: Yes.

5 THE WITNESS: Yes. Thank you.

6 VIDEOGRAPHER: Are you ready to go
7 off the record?

8 MR. NEIMAN: Yes, let's go off.

9 VIDEOGRAPHER: Going off the
10 record, the time is 9:42 a.m., Wednesday
11 May 17, 2023. We're off the record.

12 (Break taken.)

13 VIDEOGRAPHER: Okay. We are going
14 back on the record. The time is
15 10:09 a.m., Wednesday, May 17, 2023.
16 We're on the record.

17 Q. (By Mr. Neiman:) Good morning, again,
18 Ms. Bess. I want to show you now a document I will
19 mark as Exhibit 4.

20 (Deposition Exhibit No. 4 was
21 marked for identification.)

22 Q. (By Mr. Neiman:) All right. Ms. Bess, do
23 you recognize Exhibit 4?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Can you tell us what it is?

1 A. It's a compliance report for Financial
2 Trust Company as of December 31st, 20 -- 2006.

3 Q. Who prepared this report?

4 A. I prepared this document, this report.

5 Q. Okay. Was this the first compliance report
6 that you prepared related to the Financial Trust
7 Company?

8 A. If I can recall, yes, it is.

9 Q. Okay. Do you have any idea -- I withdraw
10 it.

11 The date of this report is April of
12 2008. Do you see that?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. So, That would be about nine years after
15 Financial Trust Company first became a beneficiary of
16 the tax benefit, correct?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Do you know why it took nine years for the
19 first compliance report related to Financial Trust
20 Company to be prepared?

21 A. As I indicated prior, may have had other
22 items that were priority before this report was
23 completed.

24 Q. Okay. But you would agree with me that
25 nine years is an unusually long time for wait for the

1 first compliance report in your experience?

2 MR. ACKERMAN: Objection to form.

3 THE WITNESS: In my experience,

4 yes.

5 Q. (By Mr. Neiman:) And the report covers a
6 period of April 1, 1999 to December 31st, 2006. Do
7 you see that?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. What materials did you rely on in preparing
10 this report?

11 A. The tax return, the employment records,
12 the procurement, anything that they would have noted
13 on their cover, the report -- the annual report, to
14 record the goods and services or local procurement
15 and any documentation to certify the special
16 conditions.

17 Q. And do you recall relying in your
18 compliance report on any information other than the
19 information that was provided by Financial Trust
20 Company?

21 A. No, sir.

22 Q. All right. Let's take a look at the first
23 page of the substantive report, the second page of the
24 exhibit.

25 Okay. And you'll see about halfway down